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## DUTCH CHILD SEX RING — WHERE'S THE JUSTICE?

A U.S. ally's stunning tolerance of pedophilia.

By [Peter Hannaford](#) — 6.11.12



Say "Holland" or "The Netherlands" and we think of tulips, good cheese, and an upright, hard-working population engaged in international trade for centuries. Most Dutch match that description, but more than a few are engaged in a thoroughly despicable activity: a child sex and pornography ring.

The uncovering of the ring by law enforcement agencies has led in recent days to 33 arrests worldwide, including 13 in the Netherlands (and eight in the U.S). One Dutch citizen is accused of sexual assaults on 67 children.

According to the State Department's 2011 report on trafficking in persons, "the Netherlands is primarily a source, destination, and transit country for men, women, and children subjected to sex trafficking."

Dutch prosecutors asked for a ban on a pedophile group named "Martijn" which advocates consensual sex between adults and children. In a court hearing in the city of Assen, they contended, "Its banning and dissolution are necessary to avoid a dangerous situation for society." They said the group created "a sub-culture in which sexual relations between adults and children are tolerated and even glorified."

In what at first glance seems to be a peculiarly contrary position, the Dutch Ministry of Justice has opposed the requested ban, claiming that the "Martijn" group's activities were not illegal under Dutch law. Its attorney claims protection under "freedom of expression."

With the indulgence of the Ministry of Justice, it's little wonder that pedophiles in the Netherlands seem to find it relatively easy to "express themselves." Why is this so? The indulgence is not new. In Fall 1998, an investigation by the Netherlands' State Secretary of Justice into an Amsterdam brothel linked senior politicians and justice officials to the sexual abuse of young boys. One of the perpetrators identified in that investigation by a young male victim was Joris Demmink, the current Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice -- the same government body that opposes banning "Martijn," the child sex promotion group.

In the mid 1990s while in Turkey, Demmink sexually assaulted numerous boys between the ages of 12 and 16, according to Adèle van der Plas, Dutch attorney for two of the victims. The victims of his attacks have come forward and demanded prosecution. She says that one victim was 12 at the time he was brought by a police officer to Demmink's chambers, where he was repeatedly sexually assaulted by Demmink. Another boy was 14 at the time he was brought to Demmink and assaulted. Recently, a third child victim, a Turkish boy, has come forward.

Van de Plas says, "It's an outrage that Demmink has not been held to account for his crimes against children. Demmink's perversion of Dutch justice to protect himself is an offense to any standard of basic decency. I hope our friends in other countries become aware of what's happening and raise their voices in protest.

"We cannot allow Demmink's offenses to be quietly hidden away. We must demand his public accountability in a court of law."

The allegations against Demmink raise serious issues, not only for the Netherlands, but for allied countries including the United States. How much credibility can joint anti-child sex trafficking activities have if a key enforcement official may be implicated in such activities and, at the same time, is in a position to block inquiries of the allegations against him?

Why has he not brought to court to face justice both as to his own behavior and his apparent ability to protect groups such as "Martijn"?

U.S. officials need to ask some sharp questions. The offices at the Departments of State and Justice that are concerned with child trafficking, as well as corresponding committees in Congress, need to look into this. The Netherlands is a long-time ally, but the Dutch government needs to know that it must no longer turn a blind eye to this international children sex ring -- apparently centered on its shores. This means the accusations against Demmink must be subjected to full public scrutiny.

***Mr. Hannaford is a member of the Committee on the Present Danger.***

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